(d) The applications were pending due to delay in holding of allotment committee meetings. Recently the PCO allotment policy has been revised to make available STD/ISD/PCO freely. All the pending applications are to be cleared progressively by March, 2000 subject to technical feasibility and the applicants fulfilling other conditions.

Replacement of Telephone Sets of Subscribers

2034. SHRI SURYABHAN PATIL VAHADANE: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Kurebhar telephone exchange in Sultanpur had recently caught fire requiring telephone sets provided to subscribers to be replaced;

(b) if so, whether the telephone sets of all the subscribers have since been replaced;

(c) if not, the details of those whose sets have not been replaced alongwith the reasons therefor particularly from the village Chamurkha;

(d) whether local Telecom officials including S.D.O. are demanding money from subscribers for replacing their sets;

(e) if so, whether Government would get the matter investigated by an independent agency; and

(f) by when Government would replace the telephone sets of all the subscribers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) Yes Sir, there was an electric contact of 220 V. Power supply due to falling of electric wire on the subscribers loop of Telephone No. 66222 of Chamurkha village in Kurebhar exchange on 18.9.99 and there was minor damage to exchange equipment i.e. two line cards,one TIC card. There telephone instruments were affected and all the three affected telephone instruments and damaged cards were replaced within a week time.

(b) & (c) Yes Sir, three telephone instruments have been replaced including the telephone instruments of village Chamuri (Chamurkha).

(d) No Sir.

(e) Not applicable in view of reply in Para (b) & (d) above.

(f) Not applicable in view of reply given in Para (b) & (c) above.

Re-Allocation of Arama V.P.T. in Nalanda District of Bihar

2035. SHRI SURYABHAN PATIL VAHADANE: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Arama V.P.T. in Nalanda District is proposed to be relocated/shifted;

(b) if so, what are the reasons therefor;

(c) whether representations have been received from local public including public representatives against such a move;

(d) whether the present location is ideal one from the point of view of revenue earning by the telecom department;

(e) if so, whether the only pressing reason for shifting it is to give benefit to Parwalpur V.P.T.; and

(f) in what manner Government propose to compensate the loss suffered by the allottee of the above V.P.T. due to its closure?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) to (f) Only on public complaint about its location the VPT at Arama in Bihar Sharif sub division, Nalanda district, Bihar had to be discontinued temporarily. Matter is being investigated departmentally in co-ordination with the concerned BDO on whose recommendation the location was approved as per present guidelines for selection of location and operator. On completion of investigation suitable action will be taken keeping in view the public convenience.

STD Facility in Taluka and Panchayats in Tamil Nadu

2036. SHRI N. THALAVAI SUNDRAM: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of Talukas and Panchayats in Tamil Nadu having Telephone Exchanges with STD;